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The Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

30 December 1983

Dr. Hans M. Mark
Deputy Administrator, NASA
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20546

Hans:

I had the opportunity today to meet and talk to a rather unique individual. His name is Ronald Turnicky and he is a medical doctor and flight surgeon with the rank of Captain in the United States Army. He completed his residency at Walter Reed in pathology (combined anatomic and clinical) and is so certified. What makes him unique is that he is a doctor who is anxious to also be a military officer. He has had elaborate and extensive training--with the airborne and infantry officer. He is a ranger and has successfully completed the Pathfinder School. On top of that he flies helicopters and small aircraft.

What motivates this letter is that he has been selected by the Army as one of the candidates for mission specialist for the space shuttle program and he has a burning desire to use space to pursue medical research.

Like most candidates for astronaut and mission specialist training, his qualifications are impeccable. What makes him stand out in my humble judgment, however, is the commitment he has to serve his nation. I think that is manifested in the training that he has volunteered for so that he is a medical doctor and yet at the same time a military officer. Further, he has long been imbued with the desire to fly for NASA and has made a point to pursue his military career with that in mind.

I well recognize that the candidates for the NASA program are superior people and it is probably a very elaborate selection process to pick the best from the best. I simply feel obliged to flag Captain Turnicky's uniqueness to your attention in the hope that if there is an intangible which exists in the selection process, then this note might do it.

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I asked Captain Turnicky to provide me with pertinent data relative to his application. It is attached.

With best wishes and good fortune for the New Year.

Sincerely,

STAT

John N. McMahon

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